

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1917
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.12.2024

SCHEME FOR THE REHABILITATION OF ACID ATTACK VICTIMS

1917#. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the steps taken to provide timely compensation, free medical care and reconstructive surgery to the victims of acid attacks and the implementation status thereof;
- (b) the number of victims who have received compensation and other benefits in the last five years, state-wise details thereof;
- (c) whether Government is planning to impose a complete ban on the retail sale of acid, if so, the steps being taken to implement it; and
- (d) whether the Ministry is planning to provide vocational training and employment opportunities to the victims of acid attacks, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Section 396 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 provides that compensation under Victim Compensation Scheme is to be paid to the victims. The section further provides that compensation payable shall be in addition to the payment of fine to the victim. The Ministry of Home Affairs has also issued a comprehensive Advisory on 20th April 2015 on taking steps to implement the provisions of Indian Penal Code (IPC) now BNS, expediting action in cases of acid attack, and to provide treatment and compensation to victims.

Further, pursuant to the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 11.05.2018 in the WP(C) No. 565/ 2012 - Nipun Saxena Vs. Union of India, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has formulated the revised scheme enhancing the compensation to be given to Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/ other crimes. The scheme also covers the cases of acid attacks. The scheme was circulated by Ministry of Women & Child Development on 18.05.2018 and by Ministry of Home Affairs on 28.06.2018 to all States/UTs for compliance.

Moreover, the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has framed NALSA (Legal Services to Victims of Acid Attacks) Scheme, 2016 under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The main objectives of the Scheme include enabling victims of acid attacks to get access to medical facilities and rehabilitative services, and strengthening legal aid for victims of acid attack.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has circulated the Model Poisons Rules vide an advisory dated 30-08-2013 to all States/UTs for notifying the same to regulate the sale of acid in respective State/UT. MHA has also issued another Advisory dated 12-08-2021 to all States/ UTs to review and ensure that retail sale of acids and chemicals are strictly regulated in terms of the Poison Rules so that these are not used in crime. These advisories are available on www.mha.gov.in.

“Police” and “Public Order” are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibility to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens including investigation and prosecution in cases of crimes against women and children including cases of acid attack, rests primarily with the respective State Governments. They are competent to deal with such offences under the extant provisions of laws.

The Central Government gives highest priority to the safety and security of women and girls and has taken various steps to support and supplement the efforts of the States / UTs in ensuring their safety. The Government of India implements "Mission Shakti", an umbrella scheme for safety, security and empowerment of women. The Scheme includes components of ‘One Stop Centers (OSCs)’ under which integrated services such as Medical Aid, Psycho-social Counselling, Police Facilitation, Legal Aid and Counselling and Temporary Shelter upto 5 days are provided under one roof to any women under assault or distress. 24×7×365

toll-free Women Helpline (181) has been universalised. It provides emergency and non-emergency services to any women in need by connecting them with appropriate authorities. As of October 31, 2024, a total of 81,64,796 women have been assisted across the country. Besides, Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), which is a pan-India single number (112)/ mobile app based system for emergencies is also available to women in distress. Now, Women Help Line (WHL) is integrated with ERSS for providing 24×7 emergency and non-emergency help and support to needy women. In addition, under Nirbhaya Fund, the Central Government has provided assistance to States/ UTs for setting up/ strengthening Women Help Desks (WHDs) in all police stations. So far, 14658 Women Help Desks have been established in police stations. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development also administers sub-scheme “Samarthaya” under Mission Shakti in which the component of Shakti Sadan is for relief and rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances, including victims of acid attack.

Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has also undertaken several initiatives, which, inter-alia includes training and skill development programs for Investigation Officers, Prosecution Officers and Medical Officers. BPR&D has also prepared Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for ‘Women Help Desk at Police Stations’ to ensure their smooth functioning. Emphasis has been laid upon appropriate behavioural and attitudinal skills of the police in course of prevention and detection of crime against women and children and interaction with victims of crime. Webinars on women safety with sensitivity and gender sensitization of police personnel have also been organized by BPR&D.

Recognizing the need for psycho-social counselling to women affected by violence and those in distress, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has engaged the services of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) for providing basic and advanced training under the project named ‘Stree Manoraksha’ to the staff of One Stop Centres (OSCs) across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs of women facing violence and distress.

Moreover, the Government, through institutions like the National Commission for Women (NCW) and its counterparts in States has been spreading awareness through seminars, workshops, audio- visual, print and electronic media etc. to sensitize the people about the safety and security of women and also about various provisions of the legislation and policies etc. In addition, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Home Affairs

have issued advisories to States/ UTs from time to time on various issues pertaining to safety and security of women. In respect of the registered complaints, NCW takes up the matter with stakeholders especially the Police Authorities to ensure that the complaints are redressed and brought to logical conclusion.
